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ABSTRACT

A work study program was developed for five educable and trainable students in a high school transition class. A teacher's aide was trained as a job trainer at the workplace prior to program implementation; ongoing informal discussions at school with the program developer helped with problems that developed. The work study program developed in-class job readiness skills together with on-site work experiences at a community-based work environment to prepare students for productive work in society after graduation. Program success depended on job trainer effectiveness that enhanced student skill acquisition and readiness for post-graduation paid supported employment. Results showed that the targeted transition students performed on the job, developed necessary skills and self-confidence, and provided employers with a reliable, attentive, punctual, and motivated work force. The job trainer, who nurtured on-site student skill development, maintained a viable program. (Twenty-nine references are provided. Appendixes include a sample student attendance record, sample student skill acquisition checklist, a sample parent survey, a sample job trainer competency evaluation, and a sample student employment appraisal.) (YLB)

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THE DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF A FUNCTIONAL TRANSITION CLASS WORK STUDY PROGRAM AT THE HIGH SCHOOL LEVEL

by
WALTER L. SURICH

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A Practicum Report
submitted to the Faculty of the Center for the Advancement of Education of Nova University in Partial fulfillment of the rquirements for the degree of Master of Science.

The abstract of this report may be placed in a national Database System for reference.

February/1990

CE056120

Authorship Statement

I hereby testify that this paper and the work it reports are entirely my own. Where it has been necessary to draw from the work of others, published or unpublished, I have acknowledged such work in accordance with accepted scholarly and editorial practice. I give this testimony freely, out of respect for the scholarship of other workers in the field and in the hope that my work, presented here, will earn similar respect.

Signed Walter J Surma

Abstract

The development and implementation of an effective high school school transition work study program and the observed effects on student work skill development, self-confidence and job trainer performance.
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The center for the Advancement of Education
Descriptors: Work Experience Programs/Work Experience/Vocational Education/Special Education/Mental Retardation/Student Employment/On the Job Training/Moderate Mental Retardation/Secondary Education/Special Education Student Employment/Job Training/Trainers/Trainable Mentally Handicapped/Experimental Programs/Vocational Rehabilitation/

The absence of an effective work study program to provide community based work experience for a high school transition class and the effectiveness of job trainer training procedures was remedied by the development and implementation of a plan to include five educable and trainable transition students and one job trainer at a community work environment. The work study program developed in-class job readiness skills along with on-site work experiences at community based work environments to prepare students for societal productive coexistence after graduation. The program also focused on the selection, training, and supervision of a job trainer who exhibited competency in student supervision and training at the work site. Program success depended on job trainer effectiveness that enhanced student skill acquisition and readiness for post graduation paid supported employment. The results showed that the targeted transition students performed on the job, developed necessary skills and self-confidence and provided employers with a reliable, attentive, punctual and a motivated work force. The job trainer, who nurtured on site student skill development, maintained a viable program. Appendices include a sample student attendance record, a sample student skill acquisition checklist, a sample parent survey, a sample student employment appraisal, and a sample job trainer competency evaluation.

Appendix J

Nova University
Center For The Advancement of Education
3301 College Avenue
Fort Lauderdale, FL 33314

Observer Verification Form

Verification of Practicum Activity

Dear Observer:

Practicum students in Nova's M.S. and Ed.S. programs are asked to provide external verification that the project activities reported in their final practicum documents took place as described. You have been designated an observer to fulfill this confirmation function by the student named below. On this sheet, then, please write a note attesting to your knowledge of the project activity described in the final practicum report to which this will be attached. (Note that you are not asked to evaluate or make judgments about the quality of the project.)

Practicum Title The Development and Implementation of a Functional Transition Class Work Study Program at the High School Level.

Student's Name Walter Surich

Program Site Cape Coral H.S. Date _____

Observer's Name Barbara Stephenson Barbara Stephenson
(please print---------and sign)

Observer's position ESE Dept. Chairperson, CCHS Phone # 574-6766 ext. 216

Observer's comment on impact of the project (handwritten): ~~This~~ program will make a significant difference in the lives of the students involved. The positive aspects are showing in the students involved in the current 1st effort. They have become more outgoing and self-assured and communicative. Information from the current worksite is positive, students are doing their assignments capably and are a help.

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CHAPTER I

Purpose

School and Community setting

This high school was an academically focused institution located in southwest Florida offering creative and innovative programs for the students in attendance. The city encompassed over 104 square miles and was one of the fastest growing communities in the state. The population of 55,000 included a mixture of retirees, part year residents and younger transient families that almost doubled every ten years. The increase in population overburdened the present schools and a new school was being built nearly every year in this community.

The city schools which were a part of a medium sized school district consist of four elementary , three middle, and two high schools that enrolled a student population of 8,200. The enrollment of 1,932 at the high school consisted of 486 ninth graders, 490 tenth graders, 510 eleventh graders, and 446 twelfth graders. The composition of the ethnic population enrollment included one percent Southeast Asian American, four percent Caribbean Island American, eight percent Black and 87 percent White.

The two story high school had a pleasant atmosphere and was architecturally unique. It had been a xeriscape project site, a water conservation project through creative landscaping, for the past two years. Picturesque flower gardens and palm trees provided an inviting and warm atmosphere that welcomed students as well as vistors to enter into this academic edifice. The high school served the community by providing its' facilities for meetings in the auditorium and classrooms for evening school for continuing the education of the general population.

Six administrators, 110 full time classroom teachers, two teacher aides, three media specialists, two occupational therapists, 13 food service workers, 14 clerical staff members, 21 custodial employees, 12 part time staff members, one athletic director and 23 volunteers served the high school population. The principal was new in the position but previously served as the assistant principal for three years. The school was recognized in 1989 for academic excellence for its new and innovative programs initiated to facilitate student learning. The professional staff exhibited total commitment to student success that provided the impetus for national recognition.

The Exceptional Student Education Department included three

varying exceptionality classes and one transition class with a fluctuating enrollment of between 75 and 100 students. During the seven period schedule, 80 percent of the varying exceptionality students were mainstreamed into the regular classes, while 20 percent rotated between three subject area teachers. The transition class consisting of 10 students was self-contained except for students' participating in adapted physical education one period per day. The class of five girls and five boys included a mixture of educable and trainable mentally handicapped students of which one half have Down's Syndrome. The skill levels of the 16 to 20 year olds ranged from prevocational to actual on-the-job training readiness. The transition students attended in-school functions as a group but were encouraged to participate in after school extracurricular activities with their families and friends.

The author, for the past four years, had been preparing students to take an active role in the work environment through prevocational and vocational training. His duties included student preparation to be involved in a work study program using in-school resources to develop skills necessary for task proficiency in a work environment. The author's professional

goal was to create a functional work study program to meet the present student needs that would perpetuate into the following years. The practicum focused on the development and implementation of a viable work study program in a high school setting for a group of 10 transition students.

Problem Statement

The district emphasis was modeled to correlate in-school curriculum to prepare students to adjust to employment expectations. Prevocational skill preparation was emphasized in the middle grades, while vocational skill training followed in the high school to provide a work-like experience to enhance success on the job. Academic subject areas including concept development and functional application of curriculum material were practiced during the in-school schedule. Prior to the 1988-89 school year, the county had no transition program to train individuals for post-graduation employment. Parental interest became the impetus to develop a training program with emphasis on developing independent work experience and living skills. A developmental team consisting of parents, high school special education coordinator, principal, guidance department and the author met to discuss key aspects for developing a viable

work study program.

A discrepancy existed between the present levels of vocational skill training and the need for expanded skill acquisition to meet future work environment requirements. This was based upon thorough examination of student cumulative folders and individual education plans (IEP)'s along with a parental survey on which 90 percent of the parents responded that a work program should be a part of the curriculum. At the beginning of the 1989-90 school year no transition student was recieving vocational training in a community environment at the high school level in the county. Statewide statistics indicated that 21 percent of the trainable mentally handicapped population was 18 years of age or older and ready to participate in community learning environments. In the past between 50 and 80 percent of the working age handicapped population were unemployed U.S. Commission on Civil Rights (1983) primarily, as an outcome of not preparing students prior to graduation.

The target group of 10 transition students functioning without proven vocational skills were enrolled in the transition program. Five of these students were selected and evaluated prior to program conception. These five students exhibited an

average of only 45 percent of the skills necessary to maintain competitive employment. This figure was low in comparison to the 60 percent target score anticipated by the author. The goal of this work study program was to place 50 percent of the transition class at a community based work environment. A meeting to brief the parents about the possibility of initiating a work study program and to begin developing an effective framework was scheduled. A second area of concern was that no qualified job trainer existed in the county school system. Yet these individuals were essential to conduct a viable program. Their responsibilities included being a liason between the student workers and the school, communication with the job site sponsor as well as the author, task analysis, and advocacy including fostering worker and co-worker relationships. These concerns became the incentive for initiating an on-the-job training program for the high school transition class.

Outcome Objectives

The implementation of the work study framework took place over a 10 week period. Five transition students were selected and scheduled at a community based job site Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. to participate in a verified work

study program. Student presence at the work site was monitored with no less than 90 percent attendance anticipated during the program as measured with a daily attendance record (Appendix A:43).

Upon completion of each week at a suitably matched job location the students were evaluated using a student skill acquisition checklist (Appendix B:45). Each student scored at least 80 percent in the acceptable or exceeds range in the combined five rating categories as compared to the previous administration of the checklist. These scores were accumulated for the 10 week period to provide a final rating upon program completion. Each student final rating required success of 80 percent in two of three work experience locations.

At a scheduled meeting after five weeks of program development, the parents were surveyed using a questionnaire (Appendix C:48) and 80 percent reflected having observed a positive change in work attitude, self-confidence and self-esteem in their students. Another parent meeting scheduled at the conclusion of the program provided final input and feedback to improve the program in the future. At this meeting parents were asked to summarize the impact the program had upon individual

student work experience development to facilitate future job site determinations and program alterations.

An important objective was to provide training and supervision for the job trainer that lead to acquisition of necessary skills and qualities manifested during the program. At the conclusion of the 10 week program, the job trainer exhibited decision-making qualities as well as leadership skills while providing guidance and supervision to the students involved in the work study program as measured with a job trainer competency evaluation checklist (Appendix D:50). The checklist included decision-making, communication and leadership categories to be used to evaluate the job trainer's performance at the work site. The job trainer was rated and expected to average in the exceeds or acceptable range in all categories on the checklist. Through the accumulation of results listed above a well-managed and beneficial work study program evolved to fit the needs of the transition program.

CHAPTER II

Research and Solution Strategy

Employment opportunities for people with moderate to severe disabilities exists and should be actively pursued and expanded through better communication and collaboration among service agencies and the school. Planning strategies and coordination to assure continuity in development of work-related skills was found to be a priority to gain and maintain future meaningful employment. Research has indicated that students with moderate to severe handicaps should not be limited in their pursuit of success in the work environment (Fredricks 1987). Limitations in vocational training and future placement priorities along with the responsibility to teach skills necessary for involvement of the moderately handicapped were outlined by Wilgosh (1984). An effective work study program involves a network of strategies to stimulate interagency cooperation in the community in order to provide cost-effective innovative programs. The HRS/PL 160-28 publication compiled by Health and Human Services Office of Developmental Disabilities Planning Council (1987) indicated that sheltered workshop workers earned about $23.00 per week. In contrast supported employment programs nationally showed workers

earning over $100.00 per week. These workers reduced the cost of providing day care programs by one third and were taxpaying citizens who were not dependent on government programs. Research indicated that meaningful on-the-job training, job worker match, and ongoing support for moderately and severely handicapped people produced by a supported work study program has a positive impact on future coexistence in society. According to Andrews (1987) the goal of transition process for handicapped individuals was meaningful paid employment accompanied by success in community life. Frith (1982) reported work habits, social and communication skills, and money management should be included in a work study program. Earlier, Clark (1980) described the emphasis on providing realistic skill instruction directly applicable to employment.

Research indicated that achievement enhances self-confidence and self-esteem. Maslow's hierarchial steps portray self-esteem as a high order need (Corey 1982). A work study program involving moderately handicapped students provided fulfillment of this need. Effective schools research indicated that success fosters success (Squires 1983). Students involved in a work study program become involved and self-motivated through success

when attainable goals were set, and success in the work environment was achieved by a positive attitude. Self-concepts were fostered which led to student effectiveness when they felt positive and secure in their abilities to master work competencies (Doll 1989).

Public Law 94-142 in 1975, which lists all requirements for schools in relationship to special education, provided the framework for program development. Section 504, the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, outlined the guidelines to insure the continuity of program development (Fisher 1987). The concept of an appropriate education designed to meet the needs of special students developed and support services became a requirement to accompany the appropriateness of any program initiated.

Bullis (1983) noted a decrease in formal programs and the number of students involved during a national survey of vocational rehabilitation agencies. It was further discovered that funding was the limiting factor and the federal and local support needed to initiate and propagate work study programs was not available. Bullis included all secondary students with varying exceptionalities in the analysis of cooperative work study programs. According to Webb (1981), the preparation of

students for future job placement began in class. Special adaptation of school curriculum provided the basis for job skill development. Research by Luscre (1984) uncovered a need for community based living skill curriculum at the high school level. Task analysis techniques provided students a systematic interaction with the community which included simulation rehearsal of present and future potential work tasks. It was found that through teacher implementation a community based program reduced stress and anxiety on the job and improved independent student functioning. Parent contact, community assessment, class simulation activities, volunteer training, public awareness and financial support were emphasized in order to maintain a viable program.

According to Russell (1984), the concept of combining vocational training, academic programing and work experience became a policy change in many high schools. Placement of special students in work environments provided concrete success which increased community attention to include the severely handicapped population in competitive non-sheltered employment settings. Work site instruction, along with constant support, enabled students to become independent, confident and productive

members of society. Giangreco (1986) indicated that community based instruction should be a major part of severely handicapped student programs. Small groups not to exceed three students should be exposed to the community environment so that adaptation of generalized behaviors, which are stressed at the secondary level, are acquired.

Severely and moderately handicapped students should spend one-half of the program day learning functional academics and the other half in vocational training according to Bright (1986). Emphasis was placed on the development of good work habits including attendance and punctuality which are essential for maintaining employment. Bright determined that levels of supervision corresponded to individual students and job locations. A list of important selling points to acquire additional job sites included non-paid workers at the beginning; students carried school insurance; students were more help than hindrance; and supervision was supplied and on-going. Bright specified that job matching including supervision requirements, potential for improvement, staff training and development to recognize job match techniques along with goal understanding and correlation of objectives were critical aspects of program

development. Graffam (1982) described a Community Based Learning (C.B.L.) program that carefully selected site locations to meet student requirements and provided relationships between students and co-workers. The program provided vocational skill evaluation, career interest, assessment, career exploration and relevant employment experiences. Graffam further described the program as the first outside experience exposure for the students and outlined the progression from middle school with skill clarification and prevocational skill development, to secondary school with identifying career direction and preparation in that area.

Research completed by Fredricks (1987) described the process of organizing and development of a non-paid work study program with a goal to place students in paid community environments by graduation. The research further identified specific positive aspects that developed through involvement which included self-confidence, independence and a sense of responsibility. Fredricks also introduced task analysis teaching, supervision fading, task sequencing and outlined procedures to evaluate potential sites to facilitate job matching to build a viable program. Furthermore, ideas for rewards and reinforcement were

suggested including letters of recommendation and certificates of participation upon program graduation. Research conducted by Moon (1986) at Virginia Commonwealth University described a set of guidelines for employer contacts which included approaching employers, explaining supported employment, inquiring about potential openings, selling an incentive package and emphasizing the desire for real employment not just a handout. Blazich (1983) emphasized the need for community work environments that emphasized capability, not disability. The proper selection of job sites and careful training of job trainers fostered positive attitudes towards handicapped workers which increased the likelihood for future placements Eigenbrood (1988). Rowe (1980) noted that job trainers were the key element to improve community awareness and worker accceptance with co-workers in a business environment.

Florida Department of Education, Bureau of Education for Exceptional Students has funded five transition projects in the state of Florida. The projects began in July of 1987 and will continue until June of 1990. These programs involved school-to-work transition for students with moderate and severe handicaps and culminates with the students involved placed in

paid competitive employment. The program included ongoing support and provided on-the-job training with a job trainer for individual students during the employment period. There are 16 full-time staff members including two job trainers per district involved in the projects. Project activities included secondary curriculum restructuring, developing a community based employment model which becomes part of the functional curriculum and ongoing support services following graduation. The project sites provided assistance to other schools systems developing similar programs. Results during the period of October, 1987 through Septemer, 1988 included placement of 17 secondary students with average intelligence quotients of 44, in competitive supported employment. The majority of workers, 36 percent, were in food service and 24 percent in janitorial/custodial services. The projects were being conducted in the following counties Pinellas, Palm Beach, Bay, and Seminole in addition to Florida Diagnostic and Learning Resource System (FDLRS) serving Columbia, Hamilton, Lafayette, Madison and Suwannee Counties. Each of the projects, although similar, contained unique features. In Pinellas County, the establishment of school based Jobs Clubs for students employed through Supported Competitive Employment, establishment

of an Interagency Advisory Council and development of work experience sites for students with severe and moderate levels of disability were activities that were targeted Goldrich (1989). In Palm Beach County the area of concerns were integrating activities with non-handicapped peers including physical education, lunch and social events; individual non-handicapped peers used to aid in on-campus work experience; transition planning teams to select individuals for placement; and integrated situations on and off campus to provide optional preparation for competitive work Curtis (1989). Bay County included quarterly meetings with parents, paid enclaves and coordination of community based instruction options for trainable mentally handicapped population as areas of primary concern along with focuses on selecting appropriate community work sites, contacting perspective employers, marketing strategies, and explaining the benefits to employers Martin (1989). The FDLRS district had established a task force to develop interagency agreements, community awareness activities such as newspaper articles and presentations to local groups, and dissemenation activities presented at state and national conferences Brost (1989). Hillsborough County schools had found through research

that school districts without job coaches were at a distinct disadvantage. The problem had been addressed through an interagency network and transitional programing Wisner (1989).

Exceptional Student Education Transitional Employment Services (TES) in Seminole County, Florida was part of a state project which included students with severe and moderate handicaps. Intensive job development, training and follow-along support services provided 19 and 20 year old students with transitional employment. The project included activities to decentralize exceptional student education programs, to normalize personal and societal expectations, to provide community based job experiences, to teach critical work and social skills and involvement of adult agencies in both transition planning and postgraduation job maintenance and support. The project was set up to include a Job Experience Training Program (J.E.T.) as an initial step. The J.E.T. Program was designed to provide moderately and mildly handicapped students ages 16 and up with four different training experiences under the supervision of a job coach. The program was non-paid job experience that provides vocational skill development training at an actual job site. The program reflected the needs of the local community as well as the

handicapped students Busbin (1989).

Through the Parent Education Advocacy Training Center Anderson (1989) described the components of supported employment opportunities. Areas outlined included satisfying material needs, activity and stimulation, feelings of self-worth, acquiring respect for others and supplying a means to express creativity and productivity. Post-secondary placement options related to the work study program included transitional job training and supported competitive employment. Supported employment was defined as paid employment for persons with severe disabilities who need on-going support to get and keep a job. Job trainers, determined to be essential for program success, were identified as being a link between the employee, parents and potential employers, providing ongoing supervision and assistance and doing whatever was necessary to ensure student success.

After reviewing the results of previous community based work experience research the author developed a program to include the following effective strategies. According to Russell (1984), providing prevocational and vocational skills training leading to work experience was a primary concern in special education for moderately and severely handicapped students. Webb (1981) and

Luscre (1984) described curriculum changes, new strategies, and linkages to expand employment opportunities that were needed to provide direction for work study program development. The underlying goal as observed by Andrews (1987) of the transition process was to provide paid, meaningful employment and successful community functioning for all handicapped, young adults in the community. The trend of establishing new programs to facilitate growth and exposure has continued to expand in many secondary schools around the country.

Research completed by the Florida Department of Education in five transition projects defined procedures necessary to correlate prevocational and vocational training which enhanced development of competitive supported employment. Participants with moderate intellectual deficiencies and intelligence quotients that range from 40 to 60 exhibited a variety of skill levels that required ongoing support and on-site intervention to maintain employment. Research also identified the need for a program supervisor who would nurture a mixture of classroom strategies that emphasized employable skills; develop a channel of communication between the workplace and school; provide practical job training at individual sites; train and supervise

job trainers; provide a means of assessing potential suitable work stations; establish an assessment tool to monitor progress; and promote, articulate, and correlate the components of a job training work study program.

The development of efficient job trainers, who became student advocates, as described by Eigenbrood (1988) and Rowe (1980), were critical to begin the program. Studies completed by the Parent Education Advocacy Training Center by Anderson (1989), indicated that the ideal job trainers should exhibit the following skills: interpersonal relationships, oral communication, leadership and decision-making. The job trainers asssisted the supervising teacher in initiating new strategies and program objectives as well as monitoring student worker progress and employer satisfaction. They became integral parts of assessing specific progress and predicting future areas of concern. The selection and training of an efficient job trainer by the author including ongoing supervision and intervention at the work sites was essential in propagating the viable program.

Providing handicapped students an opportunity to live a successful life, earn an income, live independently and maintain self respect in the community were products of an organized

functioning work study program. The amount of current research along with expanded expertise by many special educators continued to provide sound skill programing that enhanced student vocational experience throughout the country.

CHAPTER III

Method

Research and planning were carefully conducted to ensure the development of a systematic work study program. The exceptional student education department, the parents, the job trainer, the high school principal and the author were committed to create a viable work study program through the investment of time, energy and money. Workshops describing similar programs were attended, job site visits to coordinate time frames and develop job matching criteria were initiated, and transportation schedules were developed while the Exceptional Education Office attempted to secure additional funds to hire and train a second job trainer.

To initiate the program the selection of possible job trainer from available personnel such as out-of-field teachers, helping teachers, and teacher aides was conducted by the author. The job trainer's primary duties included communicating between the work site and the classroom, training students to function at specific work assignments and solving simple problems that may occur on the job. For this program a teacher's aide was selected by the author to accompany the students to the job site and

perform the functions of a job trainer. This person, who had been working closely with the group in the classroom, was available to train and conduct in-class work simulation tasks prior to involvement at the actual work setting. Although the primary training for the job trainer was conducted at the work site prior to implementation, ongoing informal discussions at school with the author about following specific procedures became increasingly important as situations occurred. Conferences including the author, the job trainer and the site sponsor were conducted to initiate job rotations and to address problems that took place.

The priority procedure was to schedule a meeting with the parents to gain their insight and support. At this meeting a framework outlining information gathered from the research conducted was shared with the parents. Present at the meeting were personnel from support groups at the high school including an occupational therapist, who offered to assist in job site locations, and a representative of the guidance department, who volunteered to adjust in-school schedules. Following the meeting a team of representatives of the school including the high school coordinator, the author and job trainer visited the with the job

site sponsors to evaluate possible positions. When the group returned, students were matched according to their strengths and weaknesses and employer desires to fit particular job settings. A follow-up visit by the job trainer to acquire specific job function information in order to set up in-class practice and to further acquaint them with the job environment at the targeted positions was scheduled the next day.

Other considerations were what time frames for evaluation should be used to implement the program, when should the program begin, how long should each rotation period last and the number of periods that would be the most beneficial for the students. The program covered a 10 week period beginning during the third month of school with work evaluations taken weekly. This schedule gave the students an opportunity to adjust to the school routine and be prepared in-class with prevocational and vocational training to acquire skills needed at the job sites. It was determined that the rotation periods would be flexible and adjusted to meet specific student needs and should expose each student to at least three different job site learning situations during the 10 weeks.

The program was initiated with three students who were

previously job matched to positions and had the ability to function independently being placed at the community based job environment under the supervision of the job trainer. While the first group was receiving on-the-job training a second group of students were being trained in-class using job site procedures along with actual job site materials. Preparation for placement of these students during the second week to include ongoing support progressed according to schedule. The second group of two students was placed at the job site with the job trainer who provided close attention to the new students' progress while fading supervision with the original group.

The method used to evaluate students consisted of daily annecdotal observations written on each student by the job trainer upon return to the school, pointing out student strengths and weaknesses, indicating possible problem areas and providing information to score students weekly on the student skill acquisition checklist (Appendix B:45). In addition to written evaluations the author, job trainer and site sponsor met at a informal weekly job site meetings to discuss worker progress, quality of student performance and satisfaction with the job trainer. During these weekly site visits co-workers were

questioned about how the student workers adjusted to specific job situations, followed instructions and communicated with them. A summary of information collected from the annecdotal observation, informal observations by the author and communication with sponsors was used each Friday to evaluate progress on the student skill acquisition checklist.

At the end of a five week period a student employment appraisal (Appendix E:52) was prepared using a checklist format to provide parents with information on current student progress and presented to them at the scheduled parent meeting. The information was then discussed and parents were provided an opportunity to inquire about future program direction. A parent survey (Appendix C:48) was administered at the conclusion of the meeting to elicit views, recommendations and comments about the present program in order to make future adjustments.

At the conclusion of the 10 weeks each student was evaluated to determine skill acquisition for later job matching into a community based paid competetive employment environment. Parents were informed about the possiblility of placement and were requested to attend an individual transition plan (ITP) meeting that included information about follow-on services to maintain

ongoing support by state agencies during employment. The ITP meetings would be scheduled as soon as these placements were finalized.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

The transition work study program targeted five outcome objectives. The following were the projected outcomes of the 10 week program: the transition class would have 50 percent participation in the program; students would be present no less than 90 percent of the time; an evaluation score of 80 percent in the acceptable or exceeds range found on the student skill acquisition checklist would be evidenced in three learning situations; a total of 80 percent of the parents would show satisfaction with program results; job trainers would develop necessary decision-making and leadership skills as measured on the competency evaluation checklist with minimum category ratings in the acceptable range.

With input from the parents, and after examining the cumulative records and IEP'S, the author determined that a work study program involving the transition students would be essential for later community based living and employment opportunities. A viable work study program would prepare students with handicaps at the secondary level for productive coexistence in the community with participation in paid

competitive employment opportunities in the work environment. The program included Educable and Trainable Mentally Handicapped students between the ages of 18 and 20 who had limited previous work experiences.

The purpose of a work study program was to develop skills necessary to function in the work environment alongside other workers. The first objective was to teach students that attendance and punctuality were very important in maintaining employment. Students were expected to be present no less than 90 percent of the time at the work site during the program. During the implementation, 100 percent of the students were present at least 90 percent of the time, included were three students that had perfect attendance, with no student being present less than 94 percent. These statistics exceeded the author's original expectations. The results indicated that the students are very interested in working and the author believes that attendance and punctuality should remain constant in later work opportunities.

A second targeted outcome was to maintain a 50 percent participation in the program. The author projected that if 5 of the 10 students participated for the entire 10 weeks of the program the objectives would be accomplished. During the

implementation two additional students participated on a temporary basis for four weeks to prepare and evaluate them for later opportunities. The student participation level of 50 percent was reached during the implementation phase of the work study project.

A third area that was targeted was to determined the students skill development in areas that were essential for maintaining employment. The author developed a student performance measurement tool refered to as the student skill acquisition checklist (Appendix B:45). The checklist was divided into five major categories. The categories were then subdivided into measurable criteria. Each student was to maintain at least an acceptable rating in 80 percent of the criteria in each category. The results indicated that 4 of 5 students scored 100 percent rating in each of the five categories with one student scoring 80 percent or above in 3 of 5 categories. The author believes that with additional job experience the student that fell short of expectations will be able to function above 80 percent level in the two deficient categories. The three learning situation results were combined to formulate one score. The parents were informed of these results by the author using a

student employment appraisal (Appendix E:52) which was distributed after five weeks and at program conclusion.

A fourth objective targeted through implementation was to gain an 80 percent parent favorable response on a parent survey (Appendix C:48). The author presented the parents the survey after five weeks and again at program conclusion. The parents were very cooperative in providing responses on the survey. The responses indicated 100 percent satisfaction in the program's progress at both intervals. Some of the parents inquired on the final survey about program direction in the future and time frames for developing paid competitive employment situations. The author informed the parents that changes and research into future improvements would be ongoing and the parents would be kept informed at future meetings.

The final objective of the work study program was to train and evaluate competent job trainers using available personnel. The author determined the job trainer position was critical to the program's development. The job trainer needed a minimum score in the acceptable range in the three categories included on the job trainer competency evaluation checklist (Appendix D:50). Each week the author observed the job trainer at the work site

and wrote an annecdotal observation. At five week intervals the author prepared the job trainer competency evaluation checklist which included all pertinent information. The job trainer proved to be successful in providing training and supervision at the work site as evidenced with minimum scores in the acceptable range in all areas of the checklist.

During the implementation of the program three of the students participating were offered part time employment. One of the students was able to take advantage of the offer and began working on weekends during the fifth week earning minimum wage for 15 hours per week. The author believes that the program will continue to progress in student development with plans to involve a 20 year old student in paid competitive employment during school hours beginning the second semester. Due to program direction, an additional job trainer was reassigned at the beginning of the second semester to work with an individual at a paid competitive employment job site.

CHAPTER V

Recommendations

The basic program assumption was that students learn through practical experiences. These experiences provided independent living skills that are essential for survival in the community environment. Through program implementation the transition students were exposed to the realities of a community based employment environment.

Research conducted by the author has indicated that businesses can profit from utilization of the human resources provided by mentally handicapped workers. These workers have proven to be dependable, hard working individuals who only need an opportunity to exhibit their talents to succeed in a community based work environment. The author recommends that the following areas be pursued to maintain a successful program: schedule in-school vocational readiness activities to develop work related skills that will prepare students for future placement opportunities through the cooperation of the high school administration and staff, provide a variety of site-based work skill experience through efficient job rotations, promote awareness of past student successes through the school and local

media network, expand in-school prevocational and vocational skill development through the use of work related systematic skill acquisition techniques, and locate and nurture future community based learning and employment sites available in a service-oriented community through contact with local agencies.

The author recommends the continuation of actively pursuing new job locations to broaden the base for future placements into the job market to include a wide range of handicapped workers but feels that nurturing past sponsors to develop opportunities for future paid commpetitive employment is vital. Further it is recommended that interagency cooperation along with community awareness and involvement develop to ensure expansion into new employment site locations.

As the work study program perpetuates and becomes entrenched in the framework of the county school system, future in-school scheduling using specialty teachers, who are willing and available to work with individual transition students on work related skills, such as shop and home economics, will provide a functional, inexpensive opportuntiy to learn pertinent work experience skills. The author recommends contact with the assistant principal for curriculum to arrange schedules for

interested teachers to individually provide students with vocational instruction to ensure necessary skill development.

The author believes that publicity of the program's successes will provide an outlet for exposure to the school, to the community, and to potential employers and will continue to be actively pursued in the future. The high school media center has produced a five minute video illustrating the students' daily schedule including in-school programing, transportation to and from the job and student participation utilizing their learned work skills. The video has been shown to the school population and the parents, and is available to other schools or can be shown to prospective employers. The high school newspaper has written a feature story in its monthly edition depicting the attributes of the work study program. This publication is shared throughout the community through the mail and is distributed to the student population at school. The county resource system, Florida Diagnostic and Learning Resource System, has written a feature story in their monthly publication including pictures of the students at the work environment. This publication was shared with the community by mail and made available to other communities and teachers throughout the three county area. The

local newspaper has contacted the school about writing a story in the education section in a future edition.

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Appendencies

Appendix A

Student Attendance Record

APPENDIX A

STUDENT ATTENDANCE RECORD

From_____TO_____ Job Trainer_____

Student_____ Transition Teacher_____

Code: A-Absent L-Late X-Present

	M	T	W	T	F	Abs.	Late	Avg. Att.
Week 1								
Week 2								
Week 3								
Week 4								
Week 5								
Week 6								
Week 7								
Week 8								
Week 9								
Week 10								

COMMENTS: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Appendix B

Student Skill Acquisition Checklist

APPENDIX B

STUDENT SKILL ACQUISITION CHECKLIST

STUDENT _____ JOB TRAINER _____

FROM _____ TO _____

EVALUATION KEY

RATINGS	CHANGE
E = EXCEEDS	I = IMPROVED
A = ACCEPTABLE	S = STATIC
N = NEEDS IMPROVEMENT	R = REGRESSED

ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY	RATING	CHANGE
Attends program daily	_____	_____
Dependability	_____	_____

COMMENTS: _____

_____

_____

GENERAL OBSERVATION		
Appearance	_____	_____
Personal Hygiene	_____	_____
Independence	_____	_____
Initiative/Perserverance	_____	_____
Adaptation to Change	_____	_____

COMMENTS: _____

_____

_____

LEARNING AND COMPREHENSION		
Follows Verbal Instructions	_____	_____
Follows Visual Model	_____	_____
Retension of Instructions	_____	_____
Attention Span	_____	_____
Planning and Organization	_____	_____

COMMENTS: _____

_____

WORK FACTORS

Work Pace	____	____
Manual Dexterity	____	____
Craftmanship	____	____
Quantity of Production	____	____
Care of Handling	____	____
Safety Consciousness	____	____
Performance with Repetition	____	____
Attitude at Work	____	____
Judgement	____	____
Neatness	____	____

COMMENTS: _____

_____

_____

COMMUNICATION

Cooperation with Job Trainer	____	____
Cooperation with Co-workers	____	____
Reaction to Criticism	____	____
Reaction to Assistance	____	____
Self-Confidence	____	____

Appendix C

Parent Survey

APPENDIX C

PARENT SURVEY

	Completely Agree	Agree with Modifications	Not at all
1. Do you support the work study program concept?	___	___	___
2. Are you satisfied with student involvement?	___	___	___
3. Do you agree with the procedures followed as the daily routine?	___	___	___
4. Do you agree with the selection process?	___	___	___
5. Do you agree with the job site-location?	___	___	___
6. Do you agree with the amount of in-school training?	___	___	___
7. Do you agree with the amount of work-site supervision?	___	___	___
8. Do you agree with the amount of program time?	___	___	___
9. Do you agree that self-confidence and self-esteem have developed because of the program?	___	___	___
10. Do you agree that student involvement will lead to supported employment?	___	___	___

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Appendix D

Job Trainer Competency Evaluation Checklist

APPENDIX D

JOB TRAINER COMPETENCY EVALUATION CHECKLIST

DATE: _____
JOB TRAINER: _____
RATER: _____

RATING SCALE

NO - Not Observed
U - Unsatisfactory
A - Acceptable
E - Exceeds

SKILLS

	5 Week	10 Week
DECISION MAKING		
A. Identifies types of jobs needed.	_____	_____
B. Identifies and follows criteria for selection of specific job training and placement sites.	_____	_____
C. Selects appropriate locations and matches students.	_____	_____
COMMUNICATION		
A. Demonstrates ability to accurately communicate project goals to employers.	_____	_____
B. Communicates with employers on a regular basis.	_____	_____
C. Demonstrates ability to communicate and cooperate with co-workers.	_____	_____
LEADERSHIP		
A. Evaluates client progress.	_____	_____
B. Reliable and punctual attendance	_____	_____
C. Carries out responsibilities promptly and accurately.	_____	_____
D. Uses feedback constructively.	_____	_____
E. Remains calm under pressure.	_____	_____
F. Reports unusual significant events.	_____	_____
G. Adjusts to change.	_____	_____
H. Collects and records accurate skill acquisition data.	_____	_____

Appendix E

Student Employment Appraisal

APPENDIX E
STUDENT EMPLOYMENT APPRAISAL

From: _____ To: _____ Job Trainer_____

Student: _____

EVALUATION

		Needs Improvement		Acceptable		Outstanding	
1.	Attendance/ Punctuality	1	2	3	4	5	6
2.	Response to instruction	1	2	3	4	5	6
3.	Stays on task	1	2	3	4	5	6
4.	Relationship with classmates	1	2	3	4	5	6
5.	Works independently with a minimum of supervision	1	2	3	4	5	6
6.	Responds to constructive criticism	1	2	3	4	5	6
7.	Follows directions	1	2	3	4	5	6
8.	Practices safe work habits	1	2	3	4	5	6
9.	Practices self-control	1	2	3	4	5	6
10.	Communicates with co-workers	1	2	3	4	5	6
11.	Responds to supervision	1	2	3	4	5	6
12.	Self-confidence/self-esteem	1	2	3	4	5	6
13.	Attitude towards work	1	2	3	4	5	6
14.	Reaction to job changes	1	2	3	4	5	6
15.	Appearance/Personal Hygiene	1	2	3	4	5	6
16.	Task Comprehension	1	2	3	4	5	6
17.	Judgement	1	2	3	4	5	6
18.	Reaction to assistance	1	2	3	4	5	6
19.	Quality of work	1	2	3	4	5	6
20.	Emotional stability	1	2	3	4	5	6

TEACHER COMMENTS:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____ _____

Teacher's Signature Date